(c) whether our airlines also follow the criteria for travel in business class;

(d) if not, whether the matter was taken up with foreign airlines/ Government;

(e) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of foreign airlines/ Government; and

(f) the steps taken to prevent recurrence of such incidents in future7

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. This incident occured due to lack of communication between the passenger and the Traffic Officer at the Alitalia check in counter at the Indira Gandhi International Airport. One Shri Santraj Maurya was denied boarding by Alitalia on their flight from Delhi to Milan. As per the airline report the denial to board was due to Passenger's ignorance about immigration process.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) to (f) The matter was taken up with the Alitalia Airline and they have clarified the incident and apologized to the passenger. Alitalia has also offered one business class round trip ticket to him to travel to any destination on their network and the same has been accepted by the passenger and the case is resolved amicably.

Expansion of Rajkot airport

1349. SHRI VIJAYKUMAR RUPANI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the State Government of Gujarat has indicated the urgent need for upgradation of Rajkot airport, runway needs to be expanded and terminal building should be improved with the increased floor area and also capacity of vehicle parking facility be enhanced by the Airports Authority of India;

(b) whether Central Government has initiated the upgradation work;

(c) if so, by when the upgradation work at Rajkot Airport will be completed by the AAI; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) Airports Authority of India (AAI) has finalized various development plans for upgradation of Rajkot airport such as construction of new Terminal Building including expansion of apron, extension of runway to 7500ft. and its strengthening for AB-320 type of aircraft operations, upgradation of ground lighting facilities and safety services.

The initiation of these works is subject to handing over of required land by the Railway Authorities and diversion of Rajkot-Jamnagar Highway by the State Government of Gujarat.

Impact of open skies agreement with ASEAN countries

1350. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the proposed open skies agreement with ASEAN countries will become operational from 2010;

(b) if so, whether any fresh review has been undertaken to assess the impact of this open skies regime, which may *inter alia* intensify competition from some mega carriers, result in excess capacity to threaten the existence of the Indian carriers, which are already incurring heavy losses, presently reported to be around Rs. 2200 crores this year.

(c) if so, the results thereof; and

(d) the fresh strategy drawn up to control the **excess** capacity and/or **to develop** suitable calibrated approach to liberalization?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (d) No decision has been taken, as yet, to join the proposed open sky agreement with ASEAN countries.